

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07 AGR-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DLOS-06 DODE-00

DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5997

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 15468

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: EEC, PLOS, EFIS, UK

SUBJECT: MORE BRITISH REACTION TO EC COMMISSION

FISHERIES PROPOSALS

REF: LONDON 15269

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1. MICHAEL BUTLER, WHO HAS JUST BEEN PROMOTED TO

DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY RESPONSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC MATTERS
WITHIN THE FCO (AND WHO WAS PREVIOUSLY IN CHARGE OF
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION QUESTIONS) HAS VOLUNTEERED A
GLOOMY PREDICTION THAT BRITISH DISSATISFACTION OVER THE
EC COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS FOR THE EC COMMON FISHERIES
POLICY WILL LEAD TO AN EXPLOSION THAT MAY DOMINATE THE
INSTITUTIONAL LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY DURING THE FIRST
HALF OF 1976 -- THE SIX MONTHS IN WHICH THE UK WILL HOLD
THE EC PRESIDENCY.

2. IN A CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS ON SEPT. 28,
BUTLER DESCRIBED THE LATEST COMMISSION PROPOSALS AS
WORSE THAN EARLIER DRAFTS, DESPITE A BRITISH EFFORT IN
THE EARLY SUMMER TO WIN UNDERSTANDING FOR ITS POSITION
FROM OTHER MEMBER STATES. INDEED, THE CONTINENTAL
MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, IN HIS VIEW, DISPLAY
AN ALMOST TOTAL LACK OF COMPREHENSION OF HOW THE BRITISH
FEEL AND UNDER WHAT POLITICAL PRESSURES THE BRITISH
GOVERNMENT IS LABORING. INSTEAD THEY STICK LEGALISTIC-
ALLY TO A POLICY RAMMED THROUGH AT FRENCH INSTANCE
IMMEDIATELY BEFORE BRITISH ENTRY, A POLICY WHICH IS
UNACCEPTABLE TO THE UK.

3. BUTLER SAID THAT SERIOUS- HIGH LEVEL ATTENTION WAS
BEING GIVEN IN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AS TO HOW THE
UK COULD USE LEVERAGE IN OTHER AREAS TO GET ITS WAY
ON FISHERIES. FOR EXAMPLE, THE UK MIGHT BLOCK THE
ANNUAL CAP PRICE-SETTING EXERCISE. AS AN OLD EUROPEAN
HAND, HE REGRETTED THIS LINE OF THOUGHT -- BUT FELT
THE DOMESTIC POLITICS OF THE ISSUE MADE IT UNDERSTAND-
ABLE.

4. THERE IS, BUTLER ALLOWED, A POSSIBILITY THAT BY
JANUARY THE COMMISSION PROPOSALS CAN BE SUFFICIENTLY
IMPROVED TO REDUCE BRITISH WRATH. SUCH IMPROVEMENTS
MIGHT HAVE TO DO WITH QUOTAS AND WITH THE QUESTION
OF EXCLUDING THIRD COUNTRY (ESPECIALLY RUSSIAN) VESSELS.
BUT, ON THE BASIS OF HIS EXPERIENCE OF COMMUNITY
PROCESSES, BUTLER WAS PESSIMISTIC THAT SUCH IMPROVE-
MENTS WERE LIKELY IN THE SHORT PERIOD REMAINING
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BEFORE BRITISH ASSUMPTION OF THE PRESIDENCY.

5. BUTLER MADE A POINT OF ASKING THAT WHAT HE SAID

ON THIS ISSUE NOT RPT NOT BE CONVEYED TO OTHER EC
MEMBER STATES. WE PRESUME HIS REQUEST APPLIES ALSO TO
THE COMMISSION.

ARMSTRONG

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